

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL POSS DUPE

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16

ACTION AID-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 EA-13

AGR-03 TRSE-00 DODE-00 EB-03 IGA-01 L-02 OMB-01 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1744

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 4706

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, OGEN, CB, TH

SUBJECT: THAI RICE FOR CAMBODIA

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION PHNOM PENH FROM BANGKOK MARCH 23. REPEATED
FOR YOUR ACTION.

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 4706

LIMDIS

TO AMBASSADOR SWANK

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, OGEN, CB, TH

SUBJECT: THAI RICE FOR CAMBODIA

REF: BANGKOK 4168

1. I RAISED THE QUESTION OF THAI RICE FOR CAMBODIA WITH
PRIME MINISTER THANOM THIS MORNING. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED
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BY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHARTCHAI AND LT. GEN. KRIANGSAK. I EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM THE RTG FACES WITH DOMESTIC SHORTAGES AND HEAVY DEMAND FOR ADDITIONAL EXPORTS, BUT SAID THAT IN VIEW OF THE ACUTE RICE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND ITS ATTENDANT POLITICAL RISKS I KNEW THEY WOULD WANT TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE. I REITERATED OUR WILLINGNESS TO FINANCE UP TO 40,000 TONS AT THIS TIME.

2. THANOM SHOWED COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL PROBLEM AND SAID THAT THAILAND WANTED TO DO EVERYTHING IT COULD. HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT THE ACUTE SHORTAGE IN THAILAND AT PRESENT MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SHIP THIS QUANTITY AT THIS TIME.

3. AFTER I INQUIRE ABOUT PROGRESS WITH DOUBLE-CROPPING DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHARTCHAI THEN SAID THAT THE SECOND CROP WOULD BE HARVESTED IN ABOUT 90 DAYS, AND THAT THAILAND WOULD BE PREPARED TO COMMIT 40,000 TONS OF THIS CROP TO CAMBODIA IF THE U. S. WOULD MAKE ADVANCE PAYMENT TO THAILAND NOW. HE SAID THE PROBLEMS OF SECOND CROP CULTIVATION, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO IRRIGATION AND HEAVY FERTILIZER REQUIREMENTS, WERE SUCH THAT THE RTG NEEDED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO ENGAGE MORE EXTENSIVELY IN SECOND CROP CULTIVATION. HE SUGGESTED THAT THE REQUESTED ADVANCE PAYMENT WOULD BE USED FOR THIS PURPOSE, ALTHOUGH IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THE PAYMENT WOULD BE LOOKED UPON AS A STRAIGHT BUSINESS DEAL AND NOT AS A FORM OF U. S. ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND.

4. I SAID I WAS WILLING TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES, BUT WOULD NEED (A) TO CHECK WITH YOU AS TO HOW HELPFUL IT WOULD BE TO HAVE THIS SHIPMENT COMMITTED FOR ARRIVAL 90 DAYS HENCE, AND (B) TO LOOK CAREFUL AT THE QUESTION OF THE MECHANICS OF PAYMENT. I SUGGESTED THAT PERTINENT APPROPRIATION OF U. S. FUNDS MAY HAVE BEEN MADE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO REQUIRE THAT THE PAYMENT BE MADE TO THE CAMBODIANS RATHER THAN DIRECTLY TO SELLERS. HOWEVER, I VENTURED THE THOUGHT THAT THE ARRANGEMENT MIGHT BE HANDLED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PERMIT ADVANCE PAYMENT BY THE CAMBODIANS. I ASKED FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS IN MORE DETAIL WITH APPROPRIATE RTG
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OFFICIALS AFTER CHECKING WITH YOU ON THESE QUESTIONS.

5. I DO NOT PLAN TO TRANSMIT THIS INFORMATION TO WASHIN-

TON UNTIL I HAVE YOUR COMMENTS. MY OWN REACTION IS THAT
IF YOU SEE MERIT IN THIS, IT SHOULD BE HANDLED IN SUCH A
WAY AS TO ASSURE THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING PRICE
ARE CONDUCTED BETWEEN THE CAMBODIANS AND THE THAIS WITHOUT
OUR INVOLVEMENT.

6. I AM SEEING THE PRIME MINISTER AGAIN ON MONDAY AND
(SEPARATELY) THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE. HOPEFULLY YOU CAN
LET ME KNOW BY THEN WHETHER YOU WANT US TO PURSUE THIS
IDEA ANY FURTHER.

UNGER

UNQUOTE

UNGER

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** LIMDIS

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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